DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 318 083 EA 021 632

AUTHOR Lake, Sara
TITLE The Rationale for the Middle Level School. Practitioner's Monograph No. 9.
INSTITUTION California League of Middle Schools, Sacramento.
PUB DATE Dec 89
NOTE 21p.
AVAILABLE FROM Publications, California League of Middle Schools, 2401 L Street, Sacramento, CA 95816 ($4.25).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; *Educational Philosophy; *Effective Schools Research; *Instructional Program Divisions; Junior High Schools; *Middle Schools; Program Implementation; *School Effectiveness; *Student Needs
IDENTIFIERS *Historical Background

ABSTRACT

Almost from the beginning, the junior high school was based on the same vision driving today's middle level schooling: the creation of a unique middle tier of education that bridges the gap between elementary and secondary education and focuses on meeting early adolescent students' academic and personal needs. In the 1950s and 1960s, middle school advocates claimed that the junior high school had failed to realize its philosophy because it slavishly imitated the senior high school's subject orientation, departmentalized teaching, reliance on lecture methods, sophisticated social activities, and competitive interscholastic sports. Arguing that early adolescents need more acceptance and less competition, these advocates offered alternative practices: (1) a more intimate, personal environment created by team organization and teacher advisor programs; (2) interdisicplinary instruction; (3) varied learning strategies to accommodate adolescent curiosity and restlessness; (4) exploratory and elective programs to help expand students' horizons; and (5) appropriately designed cocurricular programs. Grade organization is not as important as program quality. New research indicates that when implemented, middle level practice is effective. Both philosophy and practice are supported by dropout studies, effective schools research, and research on corporate excellence. Certain educational restructuring movement features resemble ideas pioneered decades ago by middle level educators. (35 refernces) (MLH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED318083

California League of Middle Schools

Practitioner's Monograph #9:

THE RATIONALE

FOR THE

MIDDLE LEVEL SCHOOL

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Carl L. Zon

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

C★L★M★S

2401 L Street
Sacramento, CA ★ 95816 ★ (916) 447-7838

EA 021 632

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

California League of Middle Schools

Practitioner's Monograph #9:

THE RATIONALE FOR THE MIDDLE LEVEL SCHOOL

by

Sara Lake

December, 1989

Copyright 1989

California League of Middle Schools
2401 L Street
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 447-7838

The California League of Middle Schools is an association of people who are interested in furthering the growth and development of middle schools and middle school concepts. The League is composed of parents, teachers, school and district administrators, State Department of Education officials, and others who have an interest in the education of early adolescents.

To order additional copies of this monograph or others in the series, please see the order form at the end. For more information about the League or its publication, please contact us at:

2401 L Street
Sacramento, California 95814
(916) 447-7838

Since *A Nation at Risk* appeared in 1983, dozens of major educational reform reports have appeared. Recently, two have focused specifically on the middle grades: in 1987, *Caught in the Middle: Educational Reform for Young Adolescents in California Public Schools* and, in 1989, a report from the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, *Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century.*[1] Both call for substantial change in the traditional practices of junior high schools and a closer focus on the needs of young adolescents. Some educators may ask if these recommendations will make a difference. Should they change the way they do things?

Many, of course, have already adopted the philosophy and practices of "middle level education" which are espoused by these reports. The practices now generally accepted for middle level education include interdisciplinary team organization, teacher-based guidance, flexible block scheduling, exploratory and elective options, and varied instructional practices.[2] This "package" was basically developed in the 1960s, but it is based on a philosophy that is far older; indeed, it goes back almost 100 years to the beginning of the junior high school.

THE ORIGINS OF MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Almost from its beginning, the junior high school was based on the same vision that drove the "middle school" of the 1960s and that continues to drive middle level schooling today: the creation of a unique middle tier of schooling that (1) bridges the gap between elementary and secondary education and (2)

focuses on meeting the unique academic and personal needs of early adolescent students.

Scholars trace the beginning of the junior high school movement to Charles Eliot, president of Harvard University who, in 1888, advocated a change from eight years of elementary education, followed by four years of secondary education, to six years of each form. The middle grades, 7 and 8, would thus switch from being "elementary" grades to being "secondary" grades, offering more time for subject-centered college preparatory instruction. He felt that, as elementary grades, these two years were repetitive and redundant; as secondary grades they could be used more productively, offering "economy of time."

President Eliot's vision was realized in the early 1900s, when junior high schools began to develop. As their name implies, they took the senior high school as their model. But others soon created a different vision for the middle grades. By the 1920s, dropout studies had highlighted the need for a transitional phase that would "bridge the gap" between elementary and secondary schooling. Pioneering research by psychologists such as G. Stanley Hall delineated adolescence as a unique life stage, leading to the idea that a unique educational program should be created for this age group.[3]

Today's middle level advocates will hear a familiar ring in many old statements about junior high schools. These are a sampling, quoted from Calhoun's research review for the Educational Research Service (ERS):

NEA [1923] reported that the junior high school is not a "glorified elementary school," nor a "young high school," nor a vocational or trade school.

Davis [1924] saw the junior high school as "the country's great *opportunity* school." He believed that its major purposes lay in arousing the students' ambitions, inspiring them to reach their full potential and guiding them toward "individual satisfaction and social well-being."

Howard and Stoumbis reviewed the arguments in support of the junior high schools advanced during the period 1910 to 1930. They summarized these positions as follows:

- to reduce the number of dropouts;
- to offer educational and vocational guidance;
- to implement economy of time;
- to provide exploratory opportunities;
- to recognize individual differences in the students;
- to allow for the unique needs and characteristics of early adolescents;
- to bridge the gap between elementary and secondary schools;
- to improve discipline; and
- to establish an independent educational unit between the elementary and high schools.[4]

In general, these purposes remain valid today. If change has occurred, it may be in an intensification of the focus on student characteristics and needs, as evidenced by this 1977 list of goal priorities from the National Middle School Association:

1. Every student should be well known as a person by a least one adult in the school who accepts responsibility for his/her guidance.
2. Every student should be helped to achieve optimum mastery of the skills of continued learning together with a commitment to their use and improvement.
3. Every student should have ample experiences designed to develop decision-making and problem-solving skills.
4. Every student should acquire a functional body of fundamental knowledge.
5. Every student should have opportunities to explore and develop interests in aesthetic, leisure, career, and other aspects of life.[5]

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL: CHANGE IN MIDDLE LEVEL PRACTICE

If the philosophy behind middle level schooling changed little over this century, ideas on how to implement that vision changed substantially with the "middle school movement" of the 1950s and 1960s. Middle school advocates argued that the junior high had failed to realize its philosophy because it slavishly imitated the practices of the senior high school, e.g., an orientation to subjects, not students; departmentalized teaching; a heavy reliance on lecture as the chief instructional mode; sophisticated social activities; competitive interscholastic sports.[6] Arguing that early adolescents need more acceptance and less competition, they offered alternative practices: a more intimate, personal environment created by team organization and teacher advisor programs; interdisciplinary instruction to correct the "fragmented" approach to knowledge identified with departmentalized teaching; varied learning strategies that accommodate the curiosity and restlessness of the age group; exploratory and elective programs that help students expand their horizons; and cocurricular programs that do not push youngsters into premature sophistication or competitive situations they cannot handle.

These might be called the "tenets" of middle level practice. They have been discussed in the previous eight monographs in this series and will not be specifically reviewed here. The point is that these practices are intended as means, not ends. They are organizational structures and techniques designed to

facilitate the adult caring and student growth which are central to middle level educational philosophy.

Obviously, there is no guarantee that these practices will work perfectly in every situation; nor can it be denied that, in individual cases, other practices might work as well or better. Educators like Joan Lipsitz warn that the tenets of middle level education must be taken as guide, not gospel; flexibility and adaptation to local circumstances are vital. In her in-depth study of four schools chosen as "successful schools for young adolescents," she observes:

> Successful school organization has been achieved in these schools not by formula, mimicry, or short-term fixes, but through the evolving expression of vision, sensitivity, and personality in response to a particular social context.
>
> These schools have in common an organic structure evolving in response to the staff's evaluation of students' needs. Each school has made decisions that the other schools have rejected, like multiaged grouping, a day set aside for mini-courses, or self-contained graded classes. The particular decisions are less important than the process of decision making, which is collegial, and the basis for decision making, which is the academic and social well-being of the particular group of students and teachers.[7]

The tenets of middle level practice may be used differently in different schools, but their general acceptance is widespread. As James A. Beane notes, "their broad and frequent use around the country represents an unusually high consensus among theoreticians and practitioners that they lead to the curriculum ends we seek."[8]

THE ISSUE OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS VERSUS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

In the 1960s and 1970s, educational journals were full of the "middle school versus junior high school" controversy. After an exhaustive review of this and later research, Calhoun concluded for the Educational Research Service that junior high schools and middle schools are "more alike than different."[9] This is because many middle schools essentially remained junior high schools. This is still often the case. For example, in a 1987 study, 132 sixth graders in 45 states were shadowed by observers for one day. These youngsters were in elementary, middle, and junior high schools that used 15 different grade configurations. Results indicated that, across all school structures, student passivity and lecture predominated and interdisciplinary planning or curriculum was rare.[10]

A 1985-86 survey by Braddock *et. al.* confirmed:

> Our general conclusion is that the introduction of the 6-8 grade middle school in some cases was accompanied by fundamental changes in operating programs and learning environments for early adolescents, but these changes are not widespread and are not typical practice. In other words, most schools for students in the middle grades still look much more like the junior high school or high school of recent past, even though a sizeable minority of more innovative middle schools can actually now be found.[11]

For much of the last two decades, the chief difference between a typical junior high school and a middle school--other than name--has been grade organization: junior high schools usually include grades 7-8 or 7-9; middle schools are usually composed of grades 5-8 or 6-8. But Calhoun concluded, "most...studies indicated that grade organization had little, if

any, effect of the academic achievement or attitudes of the students enrolled in particular grade arrangements....What was far more important was the quality of the program."[12]

But if grade organization makes so little difference, how can we account for the fact that the 6-8 "middle school" grade structure has eclipsed the 7-9 "junior high" structure as the most popular middle level organization plan in the nation?[13]

A key reason for grade reorganization has always been a practical one: adjustment to enrollment changes. Like managers in any large organization, school administrators must fit people into available spaces. Even the Berkeley, California, superintendent who founded a pioneering junior high school in 1910 admitted that a major motivation was to ease overcrowding in the high school without resorting to a bond issue.[14] The ERS research review found that enrollment pressures always have been, and will continue to be, an major factor in middle level grade organization.[15]

But child development research and the vision of middle level education also seem to be playing a role. The ERS review concluded that child maturation studies tend to support the 6-8 model.[16] Fifty-four percent of the middle level principals in a 1982 survey reported a preference for the 6-8 grade structure, regardless of the structure of their own school. Principals who had changed to the 6-8 grade model gave, as their primary reason, "to provide a program suited to the middle level child."[17]

A school doesn't have to consist of grades 6-8 in order to adopt "middle level practice." Several other grade configurations

exist, including 5-8, 7-8, and 7-9. In some schools of each type one can find middle level practices. Yet recent evidence suggests that middle level practices are more *likely* to be found in designated "middle schools" of grades 5-8 or 6-8. A November 1988 ASCD survey concluded: "The middle school form of organization is far more likely to provide those program characteristics needed by the early adolescent."[18] (The "program characteristics" used in this survey match those defined in this monograph.)

Perhaps names do matter. Could it be that the name of *junior* high school subconsciously reinforces adherence to the traditional senior high school model? Have schools, in taking the grade designation and title of "middle school," felt freer to adopt an alternative model of schooling?

Today, we are going through another name change: educators are now speaking of "middle level education"--a neutral term that buries the longstanding division between junior high schools and middle schools. The new label highlights the idea that this is a third tier of education. Standard parlance still refers to a two-tiered system: elementary and secondary education. But perhaps this new name change will accustom people to thinking of the middle level as an separate form of schooling.

RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MIDDLE LEVEL PRACTICE

As the grade 6-8 school has become the most popular form of middle level school, and more and more principals focus on the needs of the middle level child, an important question arises: Is there evidence that "middle level practice" is truly effective?

It should be remembered that the 1960s "middle school versus junior high school" research did not actually study what is now considered to be "middle level practice," because middle schools so often followed traditional junior high school practice.

Full implementation takes time. A survey of California schools after *Caught in the Middle* found that schools are responding to all program elements recommended, but that "deeper organizational changes...were desired by the schools but were often not implemented very extensively."[19]

But new research indicates that, when it is implemented, "middle level practice" is effective. In 1985, Paul S. George and Lynn Oldaker studied 130 "exemplary" middle schools. These "exemplary" schools overwhelmingly used middle level practices; for example, 90 percent used interdisciplinary team organization, 93 percent had a home-base advisor/advisee program, and 99 percent made ongoing efforts for personal development as well as academic achievement. When questioned about the effects of reorganizing their former junior high schools to this form of schooling, most administrators and teachers reported improvements in school climate, student behavior and achievement, attendance and morale of both students and teachers, and student self-esteem and social development.[20]

These results may seem obvious; after all, many of these schools were nominated by experts on middle level education, who would be likely to select as "exemplary" those schools that most closely follow preferred practice. The great improvements seen after reorganization to the middle level model may have resulted

from the Hawthorne effect, as George and Oldaker readily admit; the act of making a change--any change--can temporarily improve attitudes and behavior.[21] Yet it should be remembered that at least some of these 130 schools were ranked as "exemplary" by two sources which have no obvious stake in supporting "middle level practice": the National Secondary School Recognition Program and Phi Delta Kappa's 1982 Study of Well-Disciplined Schools.

Connors and Irvin compared 93 middle level schools recognized in the 1987 National Secondary School Recognition Program with 154 randomly selected middle level schools serving grades 6-8. The Recognition Program doesn't require schools to follow specific middle level practices, although it cannot be known if judges subjectively approve of these practices and are more likely to reward a school which uses them. With this caveat in mind, it still seems significant that the middle level schools nationally recognized for their academic achievement and overall excellence were "consistently 1/3 to 1/2 higher in their level of 'middle-schoolness'" than were the grade 6-8 schools in the random sample. For example, 53 percent of the "recognized" schools used teaching teams in all grades, compared to 28 percent of the random sample; 51 percent of the recognized schools provided teachers with common planning periods, while only 16 percent of the "random" schools did so; 51 percent of the recognized schools had implemented an advisor/advisee program, compared to 31 percent of the random sample schools.[22]

Finally, In a 1975 study of Ohio middle schools, Armstrong identified some as "ideal" in their implementation of the middle

school concept and others as less successful in implementation. She found that students in the "ideal" schools held more favorable perceptions of their school.[23]

OTHER EVIDENCE SUPPORTING MIDDLE LEVEL PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE

Several features of middle level schooling are supported by other realms of research and opinion--including dropout studies, the effective schools research, and research on corporate excellence. They are also in line with the current calls for the total "restructuring" of secondary education.

DROPOUT STUDIES: One of the original goals of the junior high school was to reduce the dropout rate. Around 1910, one-third of all students left school before or immediately after grade 8. Advocates of the junior high school felt that reorganizing grades 7 and 8 would make school more enticing, or at least better prepare those who chose to leave.[24]

Raising the compulsory schooling age to 16 seemed to take the dropout problem away from the middle grades. But concern is now being voiced again. It is not so much that today's students physically leave after 8th grade (although 5.5 percent of Chicago school children do),[25] but that students at high risk of dropping out often develop major problems during their middle school years.

For example, it has been found that 40 percent of New York City's students entering high school are more than one year behind in their studies and 30 percent demonstrated attendance problems in grade 8.[26] The new Carnegie report, *Turning Points*,

notes that 56 percent of the avowed drinkers in the high school Class of 1987 started drinking in grades 6 through 9, and that pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, delinquency, and suicide are growing risks to those under 16.[27] The Task Force concludes:

> Young adolescents today make fateful choices, fateful for them and for our nation. The period of life from ages 10 to 15 represents for many young people their last best chance to choose a path toward productive fulfilling lives....
>
> Under current conditions, however, far too many young people will not make the passage through early adolescence successfully. Their basic human needs--caring relationships with adults, guidance in facing sometimes overwhelming biological and psychological changes, the security of belonging to constructive peer groups, and the perception of future opportunity--go unmet at this critical stage of life. Millions of these young adolescents will never reach their full potential.
>
> Early adolescence for these youth is a turning point towards a diminished future.[28]

Wheelock and Dorman sought to correlate the research on dropout prevention with the literature on middle level education. They found that, while the two literatures do not address each other directly, "On the one hand, literature on early school leaving describes the lack of success, alienation, and exclusion that characterizes the school experience of dropouts. On the other hand, successful middle grades schools appear to offer new ways of organizing school routines to enhance student success, promote a sense of membership, identity and self-esteem and avoid premature foreclosure of options for students."[29]

Gary Wehlage and his colleagues at the University of Wisconsin-Madison delineate several common themes of successful dropout prevention programs. One key factor is small program size, which allows students and teachers to know one other and to

feel a sense of belonging.[30] Of middle level schooling, Wheelock and Dorman say, "Teams may be called "clusters" or "houses," but their purposes do not change: to reduce the distance between students and teachers, to enhance familiarity and a sense of community within the school..."[31]

THE EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS RESEARCH: The effective schools research; Michael Rutter's study of London secondary schools, *15,000 Hours*; and Phi Delta Kappa's 1982 Study of Well-Disciplined Schools, all point to the importance of an "ethos of caring" in the schools, of effective teachers working together and taking responsibility for high student achievement.[32] Middle level practices designed to foster that "ethos of caring" include interdisciplinary team organization, teacher advisor programs, cocurricular activities, and a schoolwide emphasis on self-esteem and personal development.

RESEARCH ON CORPORATE EXCELLENCE: Peters and Waterman's study of America's best-run companies, *In Search of Excellence*,[33] highlights qualities that can easily be related to middle level practice. For example, excellent companies are "close to the customer" and "value-driven." Middle school philosophy enjoins educators to focus all efforts on the characteristics and needs of the early adolescent "client." Excellent companies practice autonomy and entrepreneurship, setting high expectations and encouraging people to be productive. Middle school practice delegates much responsibility to teacher teams and offers them flexibility and autonomy to tailor instruction.

THE "RESTRUCTURING" OF SECONDARY EDUCATION: Finally, aside from the "middle level practice" discussed in this monograph, the only widespread, existing model for middle level schooling is traditional junior high school practice, which is basically traditional *senior* high school practice. Since 1983, leaders such as Theodore Sizer, John Goodlad, Jeannie Oakes, and Mortimer Adler have condemned high school practices such as large school size, tracking, fragmentary curriculum, and lecture-based teaching.[34] If such practices are bad for teenagers in the high school, can they be good for pre-teenagers in the middle level school?

The current "restructuring" movement hopes to completely re-model America's schools, particularly its high schools.[35] A number of the movement's ideas on management and instruction resemble those pioneered thirty years ago by middle level educators. For decades the junior high school was castigated for slavishly imitating the senior high school. It will be a nice irony if, as high schools restructure themselves in the 1990s, they borrow some of the practices of their erstwhile "junior partners": middle level schools.

REFERENCES

[1] *Caught in the Middle* (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, Superintendent's Middle Grade Task Force, 1987) AND Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents, *Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century* (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989).

[2] Ann Wheelock and Gayle Dorman, *Before It's Too Late: Dropout Prevention in the Middle Grades* (Carrboro, NC: Center for Early Adolescence; Boston: Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1988), ERIC Microfiche Document ED 301 355, pp24-27 AND William M. Alexander, "Toward Schools in the Middle: Progress and Problems," *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, Summer 1987, pp324-325.

[3] Frederick S. Calhoun, *Organization of the Middle Grades: A Summary of Research* (Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service, 1983), pp50-52.

[4] Calhoun, pp55-56.

[5] William Alexander and Paul S. George, *The Exemplary Middle School* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981), p16.

[6] Calhoun, pp81-84.

[7] Joan Lipsitz, *Successful Schools for Young Adolescents* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1984), pp193-194.

[8] James A. Beane, "A Human School in the Middle," *The Clearing House*, September 1986, p16.

[9] Calhoun, p178.

[10] John H. Lounsbury and J. Howard Johnston, *Life in the Three Sixth Grades* (Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1988), pp13-14,112.

[11] Jomills H. Braddock II and Others, *School Organization in the Middle Grades: National Variations and Effects. Report No. 24.* (Baltimore, MD: Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools, 1988), ERIC Microfiche Document ED 301 320, p13.

[12] Calhoun, p21.

[13] Alexander, p316.

[14] Calhoun, p57.

[15] Calhoun, p178.

[16] Calhoun, pp178-179.

[17] Jerry W. Valentine, "A National Study of Schools in the Middle--Perspectives on Five Issues," *NASSP Bulletin*, September 1984, pp14-15.

[18] Gordon Cawelti, "Middle Schools a Better Match with Early Adolescent Needs, ASCD Survey Finds," *ASCD Curriculum Update*, November 1988, p1.

[19] David D. Marsh and Others, "Helping Middle Schools Improve: A Study of Middle School Implementation in California," *CASCD Journal* (California ASCD Journal of Supervision and Curriculum Improvement), Spring-Summer 1989, p15.

[20]Paul S. George and Lynn L. Oldaker, *Evidence for the Middle School* (Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association, 1985), pp19-22,24,27.
[21]George and Oldaker, p36.
[22]Neila A. Connors and Judith L. Irvin, "Is "Middle-Schoolness' an Indicator of Excellence?" *Middle School Journal*, May 1989, pp12-13.
[23]Calhoun, pp104-105.
[24]Calhoun, pp52-54.
[25]Ellen Flax, "New Dropout Data Highlight Problems in the Middle Years," *Education Week*, April 19, 1989, p1.
[26]Flax, p21.
[27]Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents, pp22,25.
[28]Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents, p20.
29Wheelock and Dorman, p3.
[30]Gary G. Wehlage and Others, "A Program Model for At-Risk High School Students," *Educational Leadership*, March 1987, pp71-72.
[31]Wheelock and Dorman, p24.
[32]George and Oldaker, p8.
[33]Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr., *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982).
[34]Summaries of several major reports on the high school can be found in: Sara Lake, *The Educator's Digest of Reform: A Comparison of 16 Recent Proposals for Improving America's Schools* (Redwood City, CA: San Mateo County Office of Education, 1984), ERIC Microfiche Document ED 236 153.
[35]Lynn Olson, "The 'Restructuring' Puzzle," *Education Week*, November 2, 1988, pp7-8,11.

PRACTITIONER'S MONOGRAPH SERIES

The California League of Middle Schools has published the following practitioner's monographs. The price of each monograph is the series is **$4.25 per copy,** which includes California sales tax, shipping, and handling. Your order will be shipped to you within three weeks from the date we receive your order. The following monographs are now available.

1. **Scheduling the Middle Level School: Philosophy Into Practice**
2. **Equal Access to Education: Alternatives to Tracking and Ability Grouping**
3. **Instructional Practices for Middle-level Students: Developing Self-directed Learners**
4. **Supporting Middle Level Students through Counseling and Teacher Advisor Programs**
5. **Cocurricular Activities for Middle Level Schools**
6. **Interdisciplinary Curriculum in the Middle Level School**
7. **Interdisciplinary Team Organization in the Middle Level School**
8. **Exploratory and Elective Courses in the Middle Level School**
9. **The Rationale for the Middle Level School**

- - - -